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short compass of five volumes, of the commercial and maritime law of the various Latin-American countries, and the American lawyer, with these volumes on his shelves, may consult without difficulty — indeed, with ease — the provisions of the law, which he must know in advance in order to be a safe counselor. The summary of the laws of the United States, likewise in Spanish, will be of service to the Latin-American who may wish in advance information concerning our system of jurisprudence.

JAMES BROWN SCOTT.

Frontiers. By The Right Honourable Lord Curzon of Kedleston, D. C. L., LL. D., F. R. S. The Roumanes Lecture, 1907. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 1907.

Attention is called to the admirable address on “Frontiers” delivered by Lord Curzon in the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford on November 2, 1907. The learned Chancellor called attention to the fact that he had never been able to discover any literature dealing with frontiers, although frontiers “are the chief anxiety of nearly every foreign office in the civilized world, and are the subject of four out of every five political treaties or conventions that are now concluded; though as a branch of the science of government frontier policy is of the first practical importance, and has a more profound effect upon the peace or warfare of nations than any other factor, political or economical, there is yet no work or treatise in any language which, so far as I know, affects to treat of the subject as a whole.”

After a brief introduction, Lord Curzon proceeds to consider what frontiers mean and what part they play in the life of nations, and in so doing devotes a few pages (5 to 11, inclusive) to the history of the subject. He then passes to the origin of frontiers and divides them into natural and artificial, stating that “the sea is the most uncompromising, the least alterable, and the most effective.” As second in the list of natural frontiers he places deserts, “until modern times a barrier even more impassable than the sea.”

He then considers a third type of natural frontiers, namely, mountains. While he admits that rivers are natural frontiers, he states that they are really not natural divisions “because people of the same race are apt to reside on both banks.”

In discussing artificial frontiers he passes in review the commonest type of the barrier frontier, consisting of a palisade or mound or rampart

or wall, showing that in ancient times the palisade or rampart or wall were the commonest illustration of the type; that in ancient times a common and widely diffused type was that of the intermediary or neutral zone, whereas in mediæval times marks or marches formed a common expedient. The learned author considers the nature of buffer states and the creation of neutralized communities. He then passes to an enumeration of the artificial frontiers in use at the present day among modern states, and finds them to be three in number:

(1) What may be described as the pure astronomical frontier, following a parallel of latitude or a meridian of longitude; (2) a mathematical line connecting two points, the astronomical coordinates of which are specified; and (3) a frontier defined by reference to some existing and, as a rule, artificial feature or condition. Their common characteristic is that they are, as a rule, adopted for purposes of political convenience, that they are indifferent to physical or ethnological features, and that they are applied in new countries where the rights of communities or tribes have not been stereotyped, and where it is possible to deal in a rough and ready manner with unexplored and often uninhabited tracks. They are rarely found in Europe, or even in Asia, where either long settlement or conflict has, as a rule, resulted in boundaries of another type.

The concluding part of this admirable little treatise is devoted to a consideration of the modern expedients of protectorates, spheres of influence and of interest. Of this latter category as a whole he says:

Of all the diplomatic forms or fictions which have latterly been described, it may be observed that the uniform tendency is for the weaker to crystallize into the harder shape. Spheres of interest tend to become spheres of influence; temporary leases to become perpetual; spheres of influence to develop into protectorates; protectorates to be the forerunners of complete incorporation. The process is not so immoral as it might at first sight appear; it is in reality an endeavor, sanctioned by general usage, to introduce formality and decorum into proceedings which, unless thus regulated and diffused, might endanger the peace of nations or too violently shock the conscience of the world.

The little treatise (it is only fifty-eight pages in extent) is an admirable example of the treatment of a great subject within a remarkably brief compass.

JAMES BROWN SCOTT.